

JOINT CAPITAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 5, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 12:22 p.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall.

Present:, Elaine Brighty, Pat Holland, Kay Moran, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Doug Slaughter, Diana Stein, Molly Turner

Absent: Kathleen Anderson

Others Present: Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director John Musante, School Finance Director Rob Detweiler, Facilities Director, Ron Bohonowicz, Walter Wolnik, Amherst resident.

Minutes:

The minutes of February 26 were corrected and edited. Approval was postponed until next meeting.

1. **School Copiers:** Mr. Detweiler explained the replacement schedule. The cyclical replacement each five years and annual appropriation of \$23,000 per year is intended to smooth out costs over time. In response to Ms O’Keeffe’s questioning Mr. Detweiler and Mr. Musante said this level appropriation request was more efficient because all copier funds are not always spent each year. Mr. Bohonowicz noted that there was a second act for the replaced copiers as hand-me-downs in other departments.

2. **School Facilities:** Mr. Bohonowicz began his presentation with an explanation of his basic principles and strategies of his management of the facilities. One strategy was to give back any money for projects once the project is completed. His second strategy is to only request for only monies that are “mission critical.”

- **Transportation—Buses:** This is Mr. Bohonowicz’s highest priority. “We must be sure we get the students to school.” Best practices to insure reliable transport is to replace each bus after 10 years. There are 9 school buses owned by the schools and 14 SPED vans. These vans are retired to maintenance. There are 17 other vehicles from contractors. Mr. Bohonowicz explained the complexities of taking a bus full of students on the way to other towns, which then become the “half full buses,” noted by cost-conscious taxpayers, after the in-town students are let off. In answer to questions about the mix model of school owned and contracted buses he and Mr. Detweiler agreed that it was the most economical model.

Mr. Bohonowicz informed us of the compliant environmental aspects of the fleet. As he spoke, 3 buses were being converted to reduce emissions with funds from the state. All other buses have emission controls.

Students who live within one and a half miles of the school walk to school. Many students who are eligible for bus service neither walk nor take the bus but are driven privately. This was noted as inefficient and environmentally wasteful.

Many of the following items have been delayed or overlooked with an idea to “wait for renovation” Mr. Bohonowicz does not work this way. For example, if you need to use paper plates it costs 25 c per tray per day and is not cost effective. “It is better to control our own destiny.”

- Wildwood, Fort River, and Marks Meadow: Asbestos abatement and testing is required by law and will be managed with \$5,000 per year. This year is the year of the audit. New kitchen equipment replacing broken items that are at the end of a useful life is needed at Wildwood and Fort River. In answer to energy efficiency questions, all equipment is the most energy efficient available. Computer electrical upgrades are needed at Fort River and Wildwood to address increased numbers of computers and code violations. The energy management system needs upgrading after 10 years at Wildwood and needs better central heat controls. Mr. Bohonowicz continues to chase and energy upgrade initiatives such as grants from DOER. Fort River needs to replace boiler room valves now frozen. They are at high risk in event of disaster.

Exterior doors need replacement at Fort River, Wildwood and Marks Meadow. The replacement plan is \$5,000 for next five years. They weather rotted to the point of rodent access. There is a serious safety hazard, as well. They will be replaced one by one starting with the worst. Replacement also offers opportunities for energy improvements. At Marks Meadow the cost of labor and design will be provided by UMASS but the town will have to pay for materials.

- All Schools: \$25,000 to control all front doors for security, \$95,000 for elementary school restructuring, and \$10,000 for storm water drain repairs.

3. Town Facilities:

- Town Hall: \$10,000 to keep up exterior maintenance. \$10,000 HVAC upgrades for radiator controls to achieve more efficiency in heating and cooling. Ms Stein asked about the settings for the school thermostats. All buildings are set at 55 F at night and 68 daytime.
- Bangs Community Center: \$12,000 to repair the boiler and 30 dysfunctional control boxes. \$25,000 to replace the sidewalk which has become a safety hazard and \$10,000 for exterior maintenance.
- Child Care Facility: \$7,500 for exterior maintenance.
- Munson Library: The Munson Trustees generate enough funds to maintain a lot of the building. \$15,000 will improve access control, install an improved energy management system, repair broken shutters, sign and rebuild the back steps with original Pelham Stone.
- All Building: \$25,000 catch-all general account to fund unexpected emergency repairs, especially the roofs. Mr. Bohonowicz thinks that watertight buildings essential for preventative maintenance.

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 PM

Molly Turner, Clerk of the Day